Preparatory Committee for the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

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Working paper submitted by Belgium, the Netherlands and Norway

I. Preservation of the integrity of the NPT-regime

1. The States Parties to the NPT reaffirm the vital role the Treaty plays in promoting international peace and security and underline the importance of full compliance with all its terms.

2. Recent challenges to the Treaty and the non-proliferation regime have underlined the importance of working actively towards universal adherence and full compliance with the Treaty's provisions. A strong commitment by all Parties to the goals set out in the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference can contribute to ensuring the continued vitality of the Treaty.

3. Universal adherence to the Treaty is a core objective. We call on India, Israel and Pakistan to accede unconditionally to the Treaty as non-nuclear weapons States. In this context, our countries stress the importance of the request by the States Parties to the President of the 2000 NPT Review Conference, to convey formally the views of the States Parties on the necessity of universal adherence to the Treaty of all non-states Parties, and to report their responses to the States Parties. We deem such efforts to be a valuable contribution to enhancing the universal adherence to the Treaty.

We deplore the announcement of the DPRK of its intention to withdraw from the Treaty. We continue to urge the DPRK to return to full compliance with its international non-proliferation obligations under the Treaty, including its safeguards agreement with the IAEA.

4. In view of the recent challenges and taking into account the experience gained through more recent disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation treaties, ways and means should be explored to strengthen the institutional framework of the Treaty, thereby providing opportunities for States Parties to consult on an annual basis.

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II. Safeguards and verification

5. We stress the obligation for the non-nuclear weapons States to conclude safeguard agreements in accordance with Article III of the Treaty. In this context, we consider the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement (INFCIRC/153) combined with the Additional Protocol (INFCIRC/540), to be the verification standard under the NPT. We strongly urge all States Parties to conclude and implement such a protocol without delay, thereby enhancing confidence in compliance.

6. While welcoming its declared intention to ratify the Additional Protocol, we urge Iran to provide full and proactive cooperation with the IAEA in resolving all outstanding questions in a spirit of full transparency.

III. Accountability and transparency

7. We confirm the importance of measures aimed at increasing accountability and transparency with regard to nuclear arsenals. In addition to the transparency measures already agreed to in the 2000 Final Document, we urge the nuclear weapons States to commit themselves to provide periodically the aggregated number of warheads, delivery systems and stocks of fissile materials for explosive purposes in their possession. The nuclear States should provide this information in the form of regular reports under step 12 (Article VI, paragraph 15) of the 2000 Final Document.

8. To enhance regular reporting by all States Parties on the implementation of Article VI and paragraph 4 (c) of the 1995 Decision on 'Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament', we emphasize the necessity for States Parties to report to each session of the Preparatory Committee and to the Review Conference.

IV. Fissile material

9. A Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT) constitutes the next logical step on the multilateral nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament agenda. Having recognised the necessity of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices (FMCT), we call upon the immediate commencement of these negotiations, without any further delay and with a view to their conclusion within five years.

10. Pending the entry-into-force of such a Treaty, we call upon all States concerned to declare or reaffirm a moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices and to take transparency measures related to production and stocks. Such steps could include verification activities at less sensitive facilities to gain verification experience, to ease the implementation of the treaty and to confirm production moratoria. These steps would undoubtedly be conducive to preparing the ground for expedient negotiations on an FMCT and would, in their own right, be a useful interim contribution to nuclear non-proliferation.

11. We urge all nuclear-weapon States to conclude and to implement arrangements to place their fissile material, designated as no longer required for military purposes, under the IAEA verification regime. In particular, we call upon the early completion of the Trilateral Initiative between the Russian Federation, the United States and the IAEA. We furthermore encourage other nuclear-weapon capable States to enter into such arrangements, as an important step in the direction of international control of excessive stocks of fissile materials and deeper multilateral reductions of nuclear arsenals.

12. To ensure that excess stockpiles of fissile material remain outside the military nuclear cycle, the principle of irreversible disposition should prevail. In this respect, we consider IAEA monitoring to be necessary. Trial visits and inspections could be considered as confidence building measures.

13. Co-operative threat reduction programs have proven to be an effective tool for reducing post-Cold War nuclear threats and pre-empting new ones. We encourage the exploration of ways to expand such co-operation for the secure handling and control of nuclear material with a wider international participation.

14. Strict compliance with non-proliferation obligations will also help to prevent possible terrorist use of fissile material. Noting the IAEA Plan of Action, we urge States Parties to support the additional measures proposed therein. In this respect, we particularly underline the importance of

- strengthening, effective implementation and consequent enforcement of national export controls, and the application of the principle of full-scope safeguards as a condition of supply, when considering exporting sensitive nuclear related materials, equipment and technologies;
- international coordination of national export policies and the need for all States Parties to follow the understandings of the Zangger Committee and guidelines of the Nuclear Suppliers Group, when considering exporting sensitive nuclear related materials, equipment, and technologies;
- the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and the review aimed at the strengthening thereof. We call upon all States that have not yet done so to accede to the convention.

V. Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT)

15. Our countries consider the early entry-into-force of the CTBT of the utmost importance. We therefore urge all States Parties that have not yet done so, to sign and ratify this treaty, without delay and without conditions. A special responsibility in this endeavour lies on the annex-2-States, and especially the nuclear-weapon States amongst them. Pending the entry-into-force of the CTBT, we call upon all States with nuclear capabilities to abide by a moratorium on nuclear-weapon-test explosions or any other nuclear explosion, of which the importance is confirmed at the 2000 NPT Review Conference.

VI. Negative security assurances

16. We are convinced that legally binding security assurances by the five nuclear-weapon States to the non-nuclear weapon States would strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime, and strongly advocate the commencement of negotiations to this end. Pending legally binding assurances, we call upon the nuclear-weapon States to abide by their unilateral security assurances. Furthermore, as agreed in the Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference, our countries call upon the Preparatory Committee to make recommendations to the 2005 Review Conference on this issue.

VII. Non-strategic nuclear weapons

17. The further reduction and ultimate elimination of non-strategic nuclear weapons, as called for in the Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference, constitute an integral part of the nuclear arms reduction and disarmament process. We call upon all States possessing non-strategic nuclear arms to include their reduction and ultimate elimination in the overall nuclear arms reduction and disarmament process.

18. We furthermore encourage the Russian Federation and the United States to fully implement the unilateral reductions already announced in the Presidential Initiatives of 1991/1992 in a transparent, accountable, verifiable and irreversible manner. We call upon the Russian Federation and the United States to report regularly on the implementation of these Presidential Initiatives and to gradually and timely codify these Presidential Initiatives, including appropriate verification measures.

VIII. Nuclear Disarmament

19. We consider the unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear-weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals leading to nuclear disarmament, to which all States Parties are committed under Article VI, as one of the major achievements of the 2000 NPT Review Conference. In this respect irreversibility is a core principle.

20. While welcoming the steps by Nuclear Weapon States have taken so far to reduce their nuclear arsenals (both by dismantling nuclear weapons as by destruction of fissile material and closing down production facilities), we encourage the Nuclear Weapon States to continue their efforts in this respect. In this context, we welcome the conclusion of the Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty (the Moscow Treaty) between the USA and the Russian Federation. While again recalling the importance of the principles of irreversibility and transparency, we consider this Treaty as an important step in the field of international security, disarmament, and non-proliferation.

21. We advocate a diminishing role for nuclear weapons in security policies to minimize the risk that these weapons will ever be used and to facilitate the process of their total elimination.

22. Finally, we encourage the establishment, without further delay, of an appropriate subsidiary body in the Conference on Disarmament to deal with nuclear disarmament.